

CIA/RR CB-62-21

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Copy No. 28
12 March 1962

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CURRENT SUPPORT BRIEF

POLAND ACQUIRING WESTERN TECHNOLOGY
FOR ITS NONFERROUS INDUSTRIES

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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POLAND ACQUIRING WESTERN TECHNOLOGY
FOR ITS NONFERROUS INDUSTRIES

To an increasing extent recently, Poland has been turning to western countries for advanced industrial technology to expand its non-ferrous metallurgical and nonmetallic industries. Warsaw now is importing technical designs, capital goods, and associated engineering services from the U.K., France, Italy and the U.S. Western production techniques and, to some extent, western manufactured machinery and equipment are to be used in the expansion of three of the country's major nonferrous industries: aluminum, lead and zinc, and sulfur.

In the past, when establishment or rehabilitation of these industries was undertaken by Poland, a heavy reliance was placed on conventional Soviet production methods and capital goods. By turning to the West for more sophisticated technical knowledge, Poland plans to achieve higher levels of output, probably along with savings in time and investment. As an additional consequence of the acquisition of western technical know-how and prototype facilities, the level of technology in Poland may also advance at a faster pace.

Aluminum

The existing Skawina plant, which produces all of Poland's current output of about 48,000 tons per year, was equipped in 1961 with wire drawing equipment from Italy. A second aluminum plant, now under construction at Konin, is to incorporate the latest technical developments available from France. 1/ A contract, in the amount of \$1.5 million covering technical information and equipment for this plant, has been concluded by Centrozap, the Polish governmental agency, and Pechiny (Cie de Produits Chimiques et Electrometallurgiques), the leading French producer of aluminum. Other French firms are supplying equipment valued at \$400,000. 2/ According to press announcements, the new plant, which is to have a producing capacity of about 95,000 tons, is to be equipped with large, 100,000-ampere cells in contrast with the relatively small electrolytic cells of the Skawina plant. 3/

Lead and Zinc

A smelting process for the extraction of zinc and lead, recently developed in Great Britain, is to be used at a new plant now being built at Miasteczko Slaskie. 4/

By means of this process, which is a blast furnace method, zinc, lead, and byproduct metals can be extracted from mixed zinc-lead oxide ores as well as from high-grade concentrates. As a result, utilization of large above-the-ground accumulations of mixed zinc-lead oxide ores, which heretofore have been too difficult to process, now is planned by Poland.

Native Sulfur

In exploiting resources of native sulfur during the last few years, Poland has turned to western technology in an effort to find a more economical means of extracting sulfur from low-grade native sulfur ores. During the last two years, the services of an Italian engineering firm have been used, and equipment of Italian manufacture installed at the

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Polish sulfur plant in Machow. The value of the contract with the Italian firm is reported to have been \$700,000. 6/ Further negotiations reportedly have been concluded with firms in western Europe and the US for the supply of additional equipment, valued at \$2.5 million. 7/

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